



NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

Office of the Director

9 June 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR ACTING DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Request for Declassification Authority for Select
[REDACTED] Programmatic Materials (S/TK/[REDACTED])

(S/TK/[REDACTED]) Action: Under the authority granted to you in Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-49 and Executive Order 12951, Release of Imagery Acquired by Space-Based National Intelligence Reconnaissance Systems, I request that you declassify the existence of and the fact of imagery from the [REDACTED] imaging satellite reconnaissance [REDACTED]. If you approve the declassification, I further request that you delegate the authority to declassify and release selective programmatic data, material, and technology associated with the [REDACTED] to the Director, National Reconnaissance Office (D/NRO). This authority would be exercised in close coordination with the Director, National Imagery and Mapping Agency (D/NIMA) and with other agencies involved in the original programs.

(S/TK/[REDACTED]) Background: In an effort to make available to the public as much imagery-related information as possible consistent with the interests of national defense and foreign policy, I have developed a plan to declassify the appropriate programmatic, operational, and technical aspects of the [REDACTED]. This plan is contingent, of course, upon your approval to declassify the existence of [REDACTED]. [REDACTED], made significant contributions to national security during the Cold War and a [REDACTED] endeavor would further [REDACTED] critical [REDACTED] value to U.S. policymakers. The NRO would like to highlight this declassification effort with a ceremony recognizing key program personnel, releasing selected programmatic information, exhibiting selected technology and imagery,

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and featuring an unclassified history of the [REDACTED]. These activities could further enhance the planned commemoration events for the 50th anniversary of both the U.S. Air Force and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), both of which played major roles in [REDACTED].

(U) In addition, in 1998, the NRO and NIMA may consider co-hosting a scholarly conference focusing on the [REDACTED] and the impact [REDACTED] on national policy.

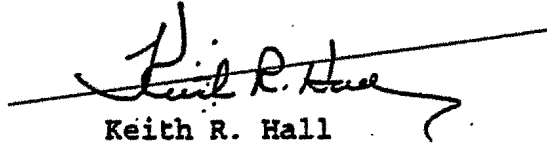
(S) Discussion: Tab 1 provides guidelines for the review of programmatic data, material, and information and identification of selected material for declassification and release. Application of these guidelines will identify a selected amount of programmatic materials for declassification and release in support of the NRO ceremony. In addition, these guidelines will form the basis for a comprehensive review and declassification of the programmatic materials for [REDACTED] in the future.

(S) I consider the availability of declassified imagery [REDACTED] essential for the success of this initiative, and have asked Rear Admiral Dantone, D/NIMA, for his views on the feasibility of declassifying selected imagery in conjunction with my proposed declassification plan for the programmatic materials. Tab 2 is my memo to D/NIMA. Tab 3 is the NIMA response, which expresses concurrence with the proposed selective declassification initiative and reports that NIMA is examining various options/alternatives to providing the imagery-appropriate declassified imagery products, including unclassified derived products, selective declassification of the primary imagery, or a combination of both. Dependent upon the ultimate decision regarding the imagery product, Rear Admiral Dantone will request your approval for declassification and release under separate correspondence.

(S/TK) [REDACTED] Recommendation: (1) That you declassify, pursuant to section 2 of E.O. 12951 and NSC-49, the existence of the [REDACTED], including

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the fact that the U.S. received imagery from [REDACTED]
(2) That you delegate to the D/NRO the authority to declassify
and release, in coordination with NIMA, the CIA and other U.S.
Government entities, selected [REDACTED] programmatic
materials identified in accordance with the guidelines forwarded
as Tab 1.


Keith R. Hall

CONCUR:

George J. Tenet
Acting Director of Central Intelligence

Date

cc: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command,
Control, Communications and Intelligence
Executive Director for Intelligence Community Affairs
Executive Director, CIA
Deputy Director for Intelligence, CIA
Deputy Director for Science and Technology, CIA
Office of General Counsel, CIA [REDACTED]
Director, National Imagery and Mapping Agency
Defense Intelligence Agency/CL

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**GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW OF PROGRAMMATIC DATA ASSOCIATED WITH
DEACTIVATED IMAGING SATELLITE RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAMS**

1. Objective: To outline guidelines for use in identifying releaseable material associated with the [REDACTED]

2. Scope:

a. These guidelines are applicable to the information and material associated with the development and operation of the deactivated [REDACTED]

b. Classification guidelines for programmatic records associated with current systems are addressed in extant National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) policy documents for [REDACTED] controlled material. Guidance for the security and classification of the reconnaissance film acquired by [REDACTED] imaging satellite programs is as published by the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA).

3. First Principle: The Intelligence Community must continue to protect from disclosure any imaging satellite reconnaissance information which, if disclosed, reasonably could be expected to reveal sensitive intelligence sources and methods, adversely affect the foreign relations of the U.S., or otherwise compromise intelligence systems. This specifically includes information and material associated with the older, retired systems. There are five categories of information that potentially could have such an impact:

a. Information about U.S. imaging reconnaissance systems that, if made available to foreign powers, could be used against the U.S. to collect intelligence that the foreign powers do not

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now have the capability to collect, or which would materially and substantially reduce the investment such powers would have to make to do such collection;

b. Information about U.S. imaging reconnaissance systems that, if made available to potential targets, could be used by the targets to develop countermeasures against U.S. imaging satellite reconnaissance operations and associated exploitation; and

c. Information about sources and methods associated with the acquisition and protection of U.S. imaging satellite reconnaissance systems that, if known by potential adversaries, could be used to acquire insights into vulnerability of our sources and methods.

d. Information concerning the targets of U.S. imaging satellite reconnaissance systems that, [REDACTED]

e. Information concerning the targets of U.S. imaging satellite reconnaissance systems that, [REDACTED]

4. Guiding Principles:

a. Any decision which would permit the release of satellite reconnaissance material must be consistent with the Director of Central Intelligence's (DCI) statutory responsibility to protect sources and methods associated with our current programs and activities.

b. The Director, NRO is the DCI's Executive Agent for providing guidance for the protection of non-product aspects of imaging satellite reconnaissance. (This includes all [REDACTED] controlled material and any other classified information related to the development, funding, and operation of [REDACTED])

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c. The Director, NIMA is the DCI's Executive Agent for providing guidance for protection of imagery and imagery-derived products collected by imaging satellite reconnaissance systems.

d. Any declassification actions for NRO-controlled program information must be evaluated and decided on a case-by-case basis for the different categories of information associated with each system (e.g., information under the general categories of hardware or funding or contractual relationships must be assessed individually for [REDACTED]).

e. Comprehensive guidelines for the protection of older program materials, including that associated with deactivated systems, are essential in order to ensure the continued protection of current satellite reconnaissance material.

5. Discussion: When determining whether or not an imaging satellite reconnaissance program contains sensitive information, the process is to evaluate the components or categories of the program in terms of the relevant sensitivity factors.

a. Categories of Programmatic Material and Information: There are seven categories of material and information associated with the development and operation of satellite reconnaissance systems. Each of these must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and the assessment must consider the impact on the other categories (i.e., would the subsequent disclosure of one category compromise a sensitive aspect of any other categories?).

(1) [REDACTED]

(2) Hardware: The actual physical equipment involved in the operation of the reconnaissance system. It includes the

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four subcategories: launch vehicle, spacecraft, sensor, and mission ground station equipment.

(3) Software: The computer programs used to operate the hardware. It also includes three subcategories: launch, spacecraft maintenance, and sensor operations.

(4) Documentation: The engineering design, operation manuals, and reference documents for the various subcategories of hardware and software.

(5) Management & Organizational Relationships: The management structure and the identification of organizational relationships. It includes the main subcategories of government and contractor. Particular attention needs to be given to any formerly covert relationships involved in the building and operation of the reconnaissance systems. Each contractor and government component is to be considered as an individual case.

(6) Funding: The overall and detailed funding profile for both the development and operation of the satellite reconnaissance system.

(7) History of Program Development: Documentation that describes how the program was developed and integrated into an operating system. This specifically includes research, manufacturing, and test facilities; logistics arrangements; and the cover/security methods used to protect any and all elements of the program. The main focus in assessing this category is to evaluate sources and methods implications. Specific consideration must be given to the possibility that disclosing a security or cover approach used in the past may highlight or foreclose use of a similar or related method in the future.

b. Sensitivity Factors: There are four factors that are indicators of the potential damage that could result from unauthorized disclosure. Asking questions about these factors will suggest the degree of national security damage that could be expected if the particular category of reconnaissance information were to be declassified and publicly disclosed.

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(1) Technology: The degree of technological sophistication associated with the material. Is the reconnaissance material unique and highly sensitive because it approaches current state-of-the art technology? Or, is it common and without sensitivity because it reflects commercial off-the-shelf products?

(2) Methodology: The degree that the material or information reflects unique and/or current intelligence methodology. Does the information or material provide insight into the intelligence methodologies that are essential to current intelligence activities? Does the information or material reflect a unique way in which the U.S. might, in a secure/covert manner, integrate technology into a current or future imaging collection system?

(3) Foreign Policy: The degree to which public disclosure might damage U.S. arrangements with its allies or damage U.S. relationships with governments and international organizations. Would foreign governments possibly acquire unacceptable economic, military, or intelligence advantages over the U.S. because of the disclosure? Would the disclosure possibly embarrass other governments or otherwise cause them to retaliate against the U.S.? Would disclosure put the U.S. at a possible disadvantage in international organizations (e.g., United Nations)?

(4) Age: The degree to which the age of the material has made it irrelevant to current national security issues. Has sufficient time elapsed to cause the information or material to lose its operational and policy significance?

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[REDACTED] REVIEW CRITERIA
Program Information of Continued Sensitivity

1. Specific Information about the Satellite Control Network:¹



¹ Specific release must be coordinated with Air Force SPACE COMMAND.

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2. Details about security techniques, methodology, and cover techniques:

- a. Specifics of the cover story;
- b. Details of security plans; and
- c. [redacted] security terminology (e.g., the term [redacted] but not the program [redacted]).

RATIONALE: (1) Methodology is applicable to certain protection requirements that continue to be relevant today [redacted]

(2) Open knowledge could facilitate detection and penetration of cover arrangements.

(3) If compromised, current implementation of security programs could be greatly complicated, or the concepts could become ineffective when adapted to future activities.

3. Sensitive contractor information:

- a. Covert contracting procedures;
- b. Details about Kodak covert film processing and associated Kodak facilities (i. e., specific Rochester facilities);
- c. Names of contractor employees and their relationships with specific, program associated, government entities; and

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d. Plans and identification of specific contractors for involvement in future programs.

RATIONALE: (1) *Compromise could increase the risk of penetration or overt disruption that could reduce the company's ability to covertly build programs in the future.*

(2) *Compromise could result in negative customer reactions that could affect the company's economic soundness and impair its capability to support U.S. Government reconnaissance requirements.*

(3) *Negative consequences for the company could result in the company's reluctance or inability to enter into future covert contracts, thereby making a particular intelligence source and method unavailable.*

4. References to and information about follow-on programs, sensitive collection operations, [REDACTED] satellite defensive measures, and related covert activities:

a. Association with U.S. Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) satellites, [REDACTED]

b. [REDACTED]

c. Indications of sensitive tasking [REDACTED]

d. Information about [REDACTED]

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e. Methodology used by [REDACTED]

RATIONALE: This information continues to require protection in the interests of national security and remains classified.

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